

the device and comprising a storage medium formatted to contain an identification code unique to the usage key card,

instructing reading of the usage key card by a reader separate from the device to download the identification code to a controller for the device, and

causing the controller to process the identification code by pre-programmed rules to either enable or disable operation of the device.

18. A method according to claim 17

wherein the pre-programmed rules cause the controller to create a table by registering unlike identification codes in memory as they are downloaded by the reader and to enable operation of the device when a new identification code is registered in the table.

19. A method according to claim 18

wherein the pre-programmed rules cause the controller to compare a given identification code downloaded by the reader to all identification codes registered in the table and to register the given identification code in the table when the given identification code does not match any identification code in the table.

20. A method according to claim 18

wherein the pre-programmed rules cause the controller to disable operation of the device when the given identification code matches an identification code in the table.

21. A method according to claim 18

wherein the pre-programmed rules cause the

controller to enable operation of the device when the given identification code does not match any identification code in the table.

22. A method according to claim 17 wherein the device, during use, applies radio frequency energy to the tissue region.